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GOLF CLUB GRIP**Cross-Reference to Related Application**

This application claims priority from United States
5 provisional patent application serial number 60/391,125,
filed June 24, 2002, the contents of which are herein
incorporated in their entirety.

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to golf club grips
10 generally, and more particularly to novel golf club grip
geometries providing enhanced stability and comfort in the
user's hand, thereby improving the efficacy of the golf
club, particularly that of a putter.

Background of the Invention

15 Golf club grips, and particularly grips of golf
putters, are configured in a variety of geometries in an
attempt to provide a comfortable grip which assists the user
in engaging the golf club and moving the golf club in such a
manner so as to strike and direct a golf ball in an intended
20 and correct fashion. In particular, it is critically
important in a golf putter to strike the ball squarely with
respect to the intended line of travel of the golf ball. In
addition, it is important that the golf club be stable in
the user's hands such that the golf club directly follows,
25 and is consistent with the motion of the user's arms. Such
characteristics are particularly important in the golf
putter so that a desired level of golf ball projection
consistency is achieved from the user's swing. Such
consistency leads to the enhancement of a particular user's
30 skill level in playing golf.

It is therefore a principle object of the present
invention to provide an improved golf club grip having a

geometry specifically configured to enhance the stability of the golf club when operated by the user.

It is another object of the present invention to provide an improved golf club grip particularly adapted for use with a golf putter.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide an improved golf club grip with an upper portion thereof having two opposed sides disposed in divergent relationship to one another.

It is a still further object of the present invention to provide an improved golf club grip having four sides, with a first pair of opposed sides each having substantially planar surfaces, and a second pair of opposed sides having radiused outer surfaces connecting the first pair of opposed sides.

It is a yet further object of the present invention to provide an improved golf club grip having a width and a depth, the width being defined by a dimension extending substantially perpendicular to the face of the golf club, and generally parallel to the direction of travel imparted upon the golf ball, with the width to depth ratio being at least about 1.10 to 1.

It is a still further object of the present invention to provide an improved golf club grip having a tapered width profile, such that the width to depth ratio increases from a bottom portion to a top portion of the grip.

It is another object of the present invention to provide an improved golf club grip with a top portion thereof having a width to depth ratio of at least about 2 to 1.

Summary of the Invention

By means of the present invention, a golfer is provided with a golf club grip configuration which enhances both feel and stability in the user's hands during the golf swing. Such stability results in enhanced consistency of relative motion between the golf club and the user's hand during the swing. As a result, the golf club grip of the present invention acts to enhance the respective user's level of play.

10 In a particular embodiment of the present invention, the golf club grip includes a hollow tapered body having a first open end and a second substantially closed end defining a body length therebetween, a front surface and a generally opposed rear surface, and first and second side
15 surfaces respectively extending between and connecting the front and rear surfaces. The body is specifically adapted to be mounted on a golf club shaft by operably inserting the shaft into the open end of the body such that the front surface is disposed generally away from the user and toward
20 a golf ball striking portion of the golf club when the club is used in typical fashion. The front surface is generally planar and the side surfaces are radiused. The body includes a width dimension and a depth dimension, with the depth dimension being defined between the front and rear
25 surfaces, and the width dimension being defined between respective outer extents of the first and second side surfaces. The body further includes an upper portion, an intermediate portion, and a lower portion, with the upper, intermediate, and lower portions, in combination, extending
30 throughout the body length. The upper and intermediate portions, in combination, extend at least 60% of the body length from the second end, and at least the upper and

intermediate portions have a width dimension to depth dimension ratio of at least 1.1:1.

Preferably, the upper portion has a tapered width profile, such that a width to depth ratio of the upper
5 portion increases from about 1.1:1 to about 2.5:1.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Figure 1 is a front elevational view of a golf club grip of the present invention;

Figure 2 is a side view of a golf club grip of the
10 present invention illustrated in Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a top cross-sectional view of the golf club grip of the present invention illustrated in Figure 1.

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

The objects and advantages enumerated above together
15 with other objects, features, and advances represented by the present invention will now be presented in terms of detailed embodiments. Other embodiments and aspects of the invention are recognized as being within the grasp of those having ordinary skill in the art.

20 With reference now to the drawing figures, and first to Figure 1, a front view of a golf club grip 10 of the present invention is shown. Front surface 12 of grip 10 is preferably disposed toward and in facing relationship with the golf club head (the golf ball striking portion of the
25 golf club), and is disposed generally away from the body of a user when the golf club is being utilized in typical fashion. As can be seen more easily in the side view of Figure 2, front surface 12 and opposed rear surface 14 are substantially planar, and are connected to one another by
30 first and second side surfaces 18, 20.

As shown in Figure 1, grip 10 includes a lower portion 24, an intermediate portion 26, and an upper portion 28.

Lower portion 24 of grip 10 is tapered inwardly toward lower end 32 to accommodate and tightly fit about a typical golf club shaft 34. Preferably, lower portion 24 tapers such that the width "A" of grip 10 at first inflection point 38 is greater than depth "B" thereat. Preferably, width A of grip 10 is greater than depth B from first inflection point 38 to top end 42 of grip 10.

First and second side surfaces 18, 20 are preferably radiused such that a cross-section of grip 10, as illustrated in the top view of Figure 3, reveals substantially flat front and rear surfaces 12, 14 connected by substantially semi-circular radiused first and second side surfaces 18, 20. Preferably, first and second side surfaces 18, 20 are substantially symmetrical, and maintain a substantially constant depth dimension B throughout the length of grip 10. Most preferably, however, depth dimension B of first and second side surfaces 18, 20 gradually increases from bottom end 32 to top end 42 of grip 10. Such depth dimension B is preferably between about 0.5 and 1.0 inches, and more preferably between about 0.5 and 0.875 inches.

Width A of grip 10 preferably increases from lower end 32 to first inflection point 38, and is substantially constant from first inflection point 38 to second inflection point 44. Most preferably, however, width A increases slightly from first inflection point 38 to second inflection point 44. Intermediate portion 26 is defined as the portion of grip 10 between first inflection point 38 and second inflection point 44. Width A of intermediate portion 26 is preferably between 0.75 and 1.0 inches. Preferably, width A is greater than depth B at intermediate portion 26, and the

ratio of width A to depth B at intermediate portion 26 is preferably between about 1.1:1 and about 1.5:1.

A preferred aspect of the present invention includes a "flared", or divergently tapered upper portion 28 defined
5 between top end 42 and second inflection point 44 of grip 10. As illustrated in Figure 1, width dimension A substantially increases from second inflection point 44 to top end 42. In such a manner, first and second side surfaces 18, 20 extend upwardly in a divergent manner with
10 respect to one another. Preferably, width A increases to between about 1.3 and 1.7 inches at top end 42. Moreover, the ratio of width dimension A to depth dimension B increases from second inflection point 44 to top end 42, such that a A:B ratio increases from between about 1.1:1 to
15 about 2.5:1, and most preferably from between about 1.3:1 to about 2.2:1.

In preferred embodiments of the present invention, changes in width dimension A along grip 10 are subtle in that first and second inflection points 38, 44 are best
20 described as transition zones whereby no sharp or readily perceivable points at which width dimension A changes exist.

Grip 10 is preferably fabricated from materials known and commonly utilized in the art. Most preferably, however, grip 10 is fabricated from a resilient polymeric material
25 having a desired degree of tackiness at its outer surface. In addition, the present invention contemplates a variety of configurations related to that illustrated and described in Figures 1-3. For example, rear surface 14 of grip 10 may be rounded or radiused rather than planar, as described with
30 reference to Figures 1-3. In such an embodiment, the radius of rear surface 14 preferably conforms to the curvature of respective first and second side surfaces 18, 20, such that

a substantially continuously curved surface is formed by the combination of rear surface 14 and first and second side surfaces 18, 20.

In another embodiment of the present invention, first
5 and second side surfaces 18, 20 may be asymmetrical in that one of first or second side surfaces 18, 20 at upper portion 28 is not outwardly flared as is shown in Figure 1. Thus, a variety of configurations may be incorporated into grip 10 of the present invention without departing from the
10 advantages introduced thereby.

As stated above, a number of advantages are introduced by the golf club grip of the present invention. For example, the substantially planar nature of opposed front and rear surfaces 12, 14 provide a natural self-orienting
15 characteristic for the hands of a user. The opposed rounded first and second side surfaces 18, 20 provide a comfortable and secure fit within the palms of the user. The primary advantage of enhancing golf club "feel" by improving the stability of a user's grasp of the golf club, thereby
20 improving the consistency in the manner that the golf ball is struck by the golf club. In particular, the larger than unity width to depth ratio of grip 10, in combination with the divergent relationship with side surfaces 18, 20 at upper portion 28 provides the unique and advantageous grip
25 feel not obtainable in golf club grips in use today.

The invention has been described herein in considerable detail in order to comply with the patent statutes, and to provide those skilled in the art with the information needed to apply the novel principles and to construct and use
30 embodiments of the invention as required. However, it is to be understood that various modifications can be accomplished without departing from the scope of the invention itself.